

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LILONG 00942 141819Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L LILONGWE 0942

LIMDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY'S PARTY

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNBN UE, MI, RH

SUBJECT: SECRETARY'S TRAVEL TO AFRICA - MALAWI

REF: USUN 3695

1. FOR DOMESTIC POLITICAL REASONS AND THE SATISFACTION OF HIS EGO NEEDS PRES. BANDA WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY WELCOME VISIT OF SENIOR MEMBER OF SECRETARY'S PARTY NOW VISITING AFRICA. HE IS NOW TRAVELING IN THE NORTHERN REGION PREPARATORY TO OPENING THE MALAWI CONGRESS PARTY ANNUAL CONVENTION IN MUZUZU ON SUNDAY, SEPT. 19, AND COULD VERY LIKELY BE REACHED AT EITHER KARONGA OR MUZUZU.

2. FROM STANDPOINT OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO GOM FOR CONTINUED COOPERATION AT UNGA SUCH VISIT WOULD ALSO BE USEFUL AS PREVIOUSLY SUGGESTED AMB. SCHAUFELLE.

3. REGARDING POSSIBLE USEFULNESS OF DISCUSSING WITH BANDA WAYS OF ENCOURAGING UNITY AMONG RHODESIAN BLACK LEADERS AS
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PAGE 02 LILONG 00942 141819Z

SUGGESTED BY AMB. MUWAMBA I AM MORE SKEPTICAL. OVER A YEAR

AGO HE WAS APPROACHED ON SEVERAL OCCASIONS BY NDABANINGI SITHOLE, BISHOP MUZOREWA, DR. GABELLAH, NKOMO AND VARIOUS OTHER RHODESIANS BOTH BLACK AND WHITE WHO SOUGHT HIS HELP AND INVOLVEMENT. HAVING A GOOD IDEA OF THE DIFFICULTIES AND COMPLEXITIES OF THE PROBLEM (HE INDEED HAS A DEEP AND LONG TIME KNOWLEDGE OF THE SITUATION AND OF THE PERSONALITIES INVOLVED, BOTH BLACK AND WHITE) AND THE SLIM PROSPECTS FOR A NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT, IN MY ESTIMATION, HE BACKED AWAY FROM PLAYING ANY ROLE UNABLE TO ACCEPT THE RISK TO HIS PRESTIGE OF POSSIBLE ASSOCIATION WITH FAILURE AND DAMAGE TO THE IMAGE OF INFALLIBILITY WHICH HE HAS ASSIDUOUSLY PROJECTED TO HIS PEOPLE. IN RECENT MONTHS CONTACTS WITH HIM BY BLACK RHODESIAN NATIONALISTS HAVE BEEN LESS AND AS BEST WE (AND BRITISH) CAN DETERMINE, RATHER OF A COURTESY NATURE. MOREOVER, IN RECENT WEEKS, A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF ZIMBABWE FIGHTERS ATTEMPTING TO PASS THROUGH MALAWI FROM TANZANIA HAVE BEEN DETAINED. MOST HAVE NOW BEEN RELEASED BUT WE PRESUME THIS HAS LEFT A BITTER RESIDUE. IN SHORT, I DO NOT THINK BANDA COULD NOW PLAY ANY OPEN OR DIRECT EFFECTIVE ROLE IN UNIFICATION EFFORT. BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER SHARES THIS VIEW.

4. WITH REGARD TO GENERAL DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM OF THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA, THESE COULD CONCEIVABLY PROVIDE USEFUL BACKGROUND AND SUGGESTIONS. HE HAS BEEN THE LONELY BLACK ADVOCATE OF "CONTACT AND DIALOG" FOR MANY YEARS. FROM THE STANDPOINT OF REACTIONS FROM WHITE SOUTH AFRICANS AND RHODESIANS A TALK WITH BANDA WOULD PROBABLY BE REGARDED POSITIVELY.

STEVENSON

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